



## **NRPC 2013 ANNUAL REPORT OF SERVICES FOR THE TOWN OF MILFORD**

NRPC was founded in 1959 with a mission to foster coordination and collaboration between the 13 communities in the Nashua region. Over the past 54 years, NRPC has developed into an organization that provides member municipalities customized services to meet their planning needs and also undertakes activities that benefit communities collectively. NRPC's highly qualified and experienced staff complements and extends municipal resources by providing a wide array of professional planning services that cover all aspects of community planning. NRPC also offers programs that would otherwise be inefficient and costly for communities to conduct on their own. In addition to programs and projects, NRPC acts as a strong and consistent advocate for communities and the region at the State and Federal level.

Services available to municipalities through membership dues in the NRPC include **transportation planning** such as grant writing assistance, specialized traffic counts and data, transportation modeling, intersection analysis, road safety audits, road surface management, parking studies. **Land Use planning** including customized board training and resources, draft ordinance and regulation review, special projects and research assistance, fact sheets, guidebooks and educational materials and master plan consultation and project scoping. **Data and GIS Mapping services** such as demographic data and analysis, mapping data and standard map sets, GIS needs assessments, production of annual tax maps and NRPC Live Maps. **Environment and energy planning** such as group energy purchase for municipal and school facilities, household hazardous waste collections. For more information, contact Kerrie Diers, Executive Director, at 424-2240 or [kerried@nashuarpc.org](mailto:kerried@nashuarpc.org).

In 2013, NRPC provided the following assistance to the Town of Milford:

### **TRANSPORTATION**

- **Traffic Data Collection:** NRPC collected traffic counts at 14 locations within Milford data may be found at <http://www.nashuarpc.org/trafficcount/index.htm>.
- **Transportation Improvement Program:** NRPC develops and maintains the TIP so that federal highway transportation dollars are available to Milford and the rest of the region. Throughout 2013, NRPC carefully monitored the status of Milford projects in the TIP to ensure that project information and changes initiated by NHDOT were communicated to the Town planning and community development staff. These include: safety improvements on NH 101, intersection improvements on 101A, the Milford Oval and South Street improvement projects, and signal modifications and improvements at the intersection of NH 13 with Emerson Road and Armory Road.
- **Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative (SVTC):** NRPC supports the SVTC in its 6th year of service. NRPC was awarded federal transit administration

funds to assist the expansion the operation of the service. This grant allowed SVTC to evaluate expansion opportunities to communities west of Milford while maintaining its level of service to the residents of Milford. It also provided the flexibility to increase the number of destinations served by the service. This service is available to eligible residents of Milford. Learn more at <http://souheganrides.org/>.

- **Congestion Management Process:** The NRPC has developed a Congestion Management Plan (CMP) designed to identify areas of congestion and develop solutions for more effective management of the transportation system. This plan provides information to municipal decision makers to assess the effectiveness of strategies and identify investment priorities. In 2013, NRPC collected travel time data on NH 101A which will be used to support prioritization of transportation improvements in the region.
- **Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) Program:** The CMAQ program provides funding opportunities for communities to address transportation needs that have a direct and beneficial impact on air quality in the region. NRPC provides application assistance, air quality analysis and presentation materials for communities interested in pursuing CMAQ grant applications.
- **Road Inventory:** Updated the town Road Inventory. This allows officials from the Town and NH DOT to have the most up to date information on Milford's roads and also forms the basis for the Town's allocation of Transportation Block Aid from the State.
- **Metropolitan Transportation Plan:** NRPC staff worked closely with the Town of Milford staff to identify local transportation improvements that benefit the Town. Including these projects in the MTP will provide the opportunity for future funding through the states Ten Year Plan Process.
- **NH Capitol Corridor Passenger Rail Project:** Participated on the New Hampshire Rail Transit Authority, the operating entity for the rail project, and pursuing options to study the feasibility of passenger rail in the corridor.
- **Regional Traffic Model:** Updated regional traffic model with new U.S. Census data, new regional employment data, and customized population projections through 2040. This update allows NRPC to provide morning and afternoon peak hour traffic forecasts, as well as more accurately model traffic signalization and intersection issues. This provides more specific information to the town when assessing the impact of traffic from new development. This capability is available for town use whenever there is interest, without cost, and the town staff has utilized NRPC traffic expertise to help study critical intersections and development issues.

- **Population Projections:** NRPC worked with the NH Office of Energy and Planning State Data Center, to update and maintain the population projections for each community in the region. These projections currently provide forecasts through the year 2040 to aid in long term community planning. NRPC worked with other regional planning commissions to develop similar projections for all towns in the state, allowing comparison with neighboring communities.

## **LAND USE AND ENVIRONMENT**

- **Electricity Supply Aggregation:** NRPC has formed an aggregation for towns and school districts to procure electricity from a competitive supplier. The aggregation's total anticipated cost savings in 2013 were \$274,201 with savings for the Town of Milford estimated at \$58,879.
- **Hazard Mitigation Plan:** NRPC met with the Town's Hazard Mitigation Team in order to prepare the Milford 2014 Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. Hazard mitigation plans identify critical facilities and areas of concern throughout the municipality, analyze potential hazards and risks to these facilities, and prioritize mitigation measures to address the hazards. The Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 encourages natural disaster planning to reduce property damage costs and injuries. Completion of a Hazard Mitigation Plan and participation in the National Flood Insurance Program enables a community to apply for fully funded hazard mitigation grants.
- **Household Hazardous Waste Program:** On behalf of the Nashua Regional Solid Waste Management District, NRPC holds six HHW collections each year to allow residents to properly dispose of these products. NRPC held six collections during the 2013 Household Hazardous Waste season. In 2013, a total of 1,532 households participated in the HHW collections District-wide; of those, 139 households or 9.07% came from Milford. Participation rates were the highest they have been since 2006 District-wide and since 2007 among Milford households. Among Milford residents, 64 out of the 139 participating households (46%) brought paint to the collection events, 42 households (30.2%) brought solvents and thinners, and 33 households (23.7%) brought lawn and garden products.
- **Milford Community Planning Grant** -The main focus of the project is to create the opportunity for neighborhoods in Milford that address the goals of the Master Plan, housing choice and affordability, walkability, and livability. To achieve the goals, NRPC worked with Community Development Department and Planning Board to draft new regulations that include new 'Innovative Residential Design and Development Standards.' The Planning Board will continue work on these issues in the coming year.
- **Resources and Training:** NRPC provided a number of training workshops for local boards and staff, and developed and fact sheets which are available on our website.

- **Regional Plan:** 2013 was spent on outreach efforts including a series of topical workshops on transportation, housing, community and economic vitality, water infrastructure, and climate and energy, as well as a series of focus group conversations. As part of the topical workshops, NRPC has compiled a summary of goals and objectives found in municipal master plans in the region, resources for municipalities, compilations of what was heard at each event, and a series of presentations of local case studies. Staff has drafted outlines for all plan components and has begun the process of developing chapter drafts with the assistance of topical subcommittees comprised of commissioners, other local representatives and topical experts. A complete draft of the plan is anticipated for mid-year 2014.
- **Granite State Future:** Developed a common data set which will be made available statewide to aid municipalities in their own planning efforts as well as resources to aid local master planning such as a scientific survey of citizen opinions and values, a series of statewide listening sessions, a compilation of statewide resources, and Climate Assessments for Southern and Northern NH.

#### **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)**

- **General Mapping and Spatial Data Maintenance:** NRPC maintains a diverse collection of mapping information and databases including local roads, real property parcels, zoning, land use, and environmental conditions. This data is applied extensively to provide mapping and analysis for local and/or regional projects. NRPC continued its quarterly updates to the town parcels layer, using the Registry of Deeds database to update the town digital parcel map to include all changes to property data. This item is a critical component of many projects conducted in the town and is always available to the town from NRPC free of charge.
- **Specific mapping assistance:** NRPC produced a GIS proximity analysis of properties along the Souhegan River to support a property owner notification from DES related to fluvial erosion. With input from the Town, NRPC also developed a regional, generalized zoning datalayer in GIS based on density of permitted uses as well as a layer of Economic Revitalization zones. NRPC also provided technical support to Milford Fire Department on extraction of ESRI shapefiles from map packages.
- **GIS Training:** Geared towards municipal GIS users and open to the public, each meeting features general news and announcements, followed by a guest speaker or open group discussion on a particular GIS project or topic. Guest speakers in 2013 included UNH Technology Transfer Center, which presented “What’s New with the NH Parcel Mosaic Map and Road Surface Management Programs” and NRPC staff who conducted a two-part program that covered GIS data and traffic modeling software for general highway planning, and a preview of the new NRPC Live Maps application.

- **Standard Maps:** NRPC maintains standard large-format maps for each of its communities that include: 1) Street Index and Town Features, 2) Land Use, 3) Zoning, and 4) Environmental Features. These maps are available online in PDF format, or in printed-form.
- **Census Data:** NRPC houses datasets from the US Census Bureau American Community Survey estimate program at various geographic levels including: state, county, town, tracts, block groups and blocks. Census data is very important in planning efforts and decision making for communities. Updated estimates in categories such as population, race, language, employment, poverty and housing are used in regional and local plans, and will be the inputs to the updated travel demand model. Census data is provided upon request to our communities.
- **Live Maps:** NRPC is putting its standard GIS maps online in an interactive format. The application's basemaps include aerial images, topographic contours, roads, town landmarks, conserved lands, and individual property boundaries. Overlay will display land use, zoning, flood, water resources, and soil characteristics in relation to neighborhoods or parcels. Cross-links to Google Street View or Bing Bird's Eye offer enhanced views of the 2D map location. Each year, Live Maps will be updated with fresh data.
- **Broadband Mapping and Planning:** The New Hampshire Broadband Mapping and Planning Program (NHBMP) is a comprehensive program that seeks to understand where broadband is currently available in NH, how it can be made more widely available in the future, and how to encourage increased levels of broadband adoption and usage. NRPC staff coordinated with each member community to obtain town specific feedback on this effort. Staff is currently in the process of compiling all of this information into a final Broadband Plan for the Region.

## **YEAR-END REPORT FOR SOUHEGAN RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**SoRLAC** is one of 20 LACs in NH that were created by the legislature under RSA 483 to provide local input to state and local permitting agencies when there is the possibility of changing the characteristics of a protected river. SoRLAC was created in 2001 after the Souhegan River was designated as a protected river.

Since that time the Souhegan River has received a considerable amount of positive attention and considerable protection. A dam blocking the entrance to the river preventing migratory fish passage has been removed. The Souhegan has been extensively studied as a pilot project for the state to determine the flow necessary to protect river quality, fish and habitat health. The Souhegan now has a plan that when implemented will eventually protect a healthy flow. At the present time, an erosion control study is being done to eventually develop a hazard mitigation plan for the corridor towns. For the first time in 200 years wild salmon have been born in the Souhegan through the US Fish & Wildlife salmon restoration program, which now unfortunately has been halted.

SoRLAC works with the Souhegan Watershed Association on a water quality monitoring program that has collected chemical and biological data on the river for the past 20 years, on river cleanups with the Merrimack Valley Paddlers, on the Adopt a Salmon program for elementary schools throughout the region, and on the free canoe trips on this and other rivers.

Six corridor towns are represented on SoRLAC: New Ipswich, Greenville, Wilton, Milford, Amherst, and Merrimack. Each has three slots available; however, only Wilton, Merrimack and Milford have the full complement of members at the present time. Anyone is welcome to attend the monthly meetings, usually the third Thursday evening in one of the corridor towns and interested citizens can apply to their town for appointment to the committee. More information about LACs is available at <http://des.nh.gov/organization/divisions/water/wmb/rivers/lac/index.htm>. More information about SoRLAC is available at [www.nashuarpc.org/SRLAC](http://www.nashuarpc.org/SRLAC).

Besides looking at permits for work within the river corridor, this year SoRLAC has set up a trail committee to explore and expand trails along the river and to educate the public on properly disposing prescription drugs so they don't get into the river. We continue to monitor repair of the landslide in Greenville, monitoring of tributaries in New Ipswich, monitoring the expansion of the Knight Property soccer fields in Amherst, and monitoring of the eventual reclamation of the BROX property in Milford.

SoRLAC invites everyone to get out on the river in a canoe or into the river in a bathing suit. There is a detailed canoe guide to the river at [www.souheganriver.org](http://www.souheganriver.org).

Respectfully submitted, George May